

**MINUTES  
CITY OF BLOOMINGTON  
COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY**

Tuesday, March 10, 2015

6:00 pm McCloskey Room, City Hall, 401 North Morton Street

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, April 14, 2015

**Roll Call:**

Members present: Gary Charbonneau, Jessica Pittman, Jeff Jewel, Molly O'Donnell, Andrea Jobe, Rebecca Swanson, Stephanie Richards, Jana McGee

Regrets: Bill Brown, David Rollo, Joe Kielar

Staff: Jacqui Bauer, Danise Alano-Martin

Public: Gwen White, Mike Litwin

Chair Jeff Jewel called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**Announcements:**

Molly announced again that she'd like to step down as co-chair. Jana indicated that she is interested.

Andrea noted that she continues working on a rooftop garden project for Middle Way House. If anyone is interested in getting involved, please get in touch with her. She will also provide a write-up of the program to facilitate sharing with others in the community.

Arizona State has launched an online Biomimicry masters program.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The February minutes were approved unanimously.

**Presentation: Economy and Jobs – Danise Alano-Martin**

Danise Alano-Martin was the City's first liaison to the Commission on Sustainability when it was first established and before the Sustainability Coordinator position was created.

The mission of the Department of Economic & Sustainable Development is focused on the three pillars of sustainability; this focus originated in the mayor's oft-repeated vision for sustainable economic development, with quality of life as the foundation. Three program areas:

- Arts and culture – including the Bloomington Entertainment and Arts District, the Buskirk-Chumley Theater, and the John Waldron Arts Center. The work of the Arts Commission contributes to this aspect as well. Other aspects:
  - Percent for the Arts
  - Routine inclusion of arts in public projects
- Sustainable development – Green Building Ordinance, Monroe County Energy Challenge, many other projects focused on collaboration

- Business relations and business development – Licensing, recruitment and retention, entrepreneurship ecosystem, advocacy and referrals, incentives and assistance, economic development districts and many, many partnerships
  - As part of entrepreneurship ecosystem initiative, have been evaluating gaps in resources and services, and have launched the Switchboard to improve networking opportunities among local entrepreneurs (bloomingtonswitchboard.com)
  - Bloomington Urban Enterprise Zone – historic façade program, Zone Arts Program, tax benefits for both employers and employees living within the zone, other benefits and targeted programs to enhance development in the zone.
  - Community Revitalization Enhancement District (CRED) – captures growth in sales and payroll taxes, and usable for economic development in various forms.
  - Tax Increment Financing – captures increase in real property taxes from commercial properties. Used to support redevelopment, to enable more efficient use of bond funds.
  - Property Tax Abatements – for projects that enhance the tax base, create/retain jobs and (locally) providing additional public benefits (such as affordable housing, environmental stewardship, public space enhancements, etc.)
  - Certified Tech Park - core 12 acres is owned by City with hope of transforming into the vibrant center of the overall CTP and an integral part of downtown. Will include innovative approaches to green infrastructure, energy, and other aspects of the area. Details of the CTP's development

### **Update on STAR Communities: Stephanie Richards**

Stephanie has taken over leadership of the effort to collect the information necessary to participate in the STAR Communities program.

Started with a brief history of the STAR Communities program and other programs geared toward ranking community/organizational sustainability efforts.

Sustainability reporting has numerous benefits, including developing goals, sharing information about effectiveness and impact, etc.

The first topic area is Economy & Jobs topic – Stephanie gave an overview of findings. Highlights:

- County-wide sales have gone up
- The number of businesses has declined slightly
- Employment has gone up
- Amount of deposits in locally based banks is increasing
- Median household income has gone up by 2% since 2010

Agreed to tackle Built Environment for the next meeting, and to give an update on progress on the Economy & Jobs section.

### **Report from the Chair**

*Election of a new co-chair:* Jana volunteered to serve in this position, and the commission elected her unanimously.

*Update on the Monroe County Energy Challenge:* The group has received a grant from the Vectren Foundation to support an EnergyMobile and an intern.

\*consider having a variety of lightbulbs that people can try so they can find the types of lights they like.

### **Report from the Sustainability Coordinator**

*Hoosier to Hoosier Community Sale Kickoff:* The meeting took place last week and turnout was good. Jacqui will keep the commission informed on upcoming activities.

*Green Building Ordinance update to City Council:* Jacqui gave an update on progress under the 2009 Green Building Ordinance, including an update on the LEED evaluation and retrocommissioning at the Utilities building.

### **Committee reports**

*Environmental Commission:* Andrea wasn't able to attend the EC meeting but reviewed the minutes and gave a short update. Someone who lives near the Lemon Lane Landfill also attended. EC 2015 goals: to require recycling in downtown apartment buildings and businesses; to finish the Climate Action Plan.

*Environmental Commission Planning Committee:* No updates.

*Bring Your Bag Bloomington update:* The committee working on this is seeking a letter of support from BCOS in time for their presentation of the draft ordinance to the city council. The commission will talk about this in detail next month.

### **Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Next month: update on Economy & Jobs, presentation on Built Environment, BYBB ordinance discussion